

Message Text

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44

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 OMB-01 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 IO-13 RSR-01 /119 W

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R 181236Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3117

INFO AMEMBASSY IALAMBAD

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: IR, AF

SUBJECT: IRANIAN REACTION TO AFGHAN COUP

REF: TEHRAN 4991

SUMMARY: GOI WITHHELD NEWS OF COUP IN KABUL UNTIL 2:00 PM NEWS
BOARDCAST JULY 17 BUT AFTERNOON FARSI LANGUAGE PAPER AND
JULY 18 MORNING PRESS ALL HEADLINE AFGHAN KING'S FALL.
CONSIDERABLE NEWS AND BACKGROUND COVERAGE ON INSIDE PAGES
BUT NO IRANIAN EDITORIAL COMMENT AS YET. VARIOUS MFA OFFICIALS
PROFESS CONCERN OVER EVENTS IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRY, ESPECIALLY
WITH REGARD TO POSSIBLE SOVIET INVOLVEMENT AND EFFECTS OF
DAUD'S RETURN TO POWER ON PAK-AFGHAN RELATIONS BUT GOI SO
FAR APPEARS TO BE TAKING COUP CALMLY AND ADOPTING A WAIT-AND-
SEE ATTITUDE TOWARDS NEW AFGHAN REGIME. END SUMMARY.

1. IRANIA MEDIA DID NOT BROADCAST NEWS OF AFGHAN COUP
UNTIL 2:00 PM NEW BULLETIN JULY 17, WHICH WAS LARGELY A
REPETITION OF AN ALL INDIA RADIO REPORT. HOWEVER, GOI WAS
INFORMED OF EVENTS IN KABUL AND WORD OF MOUTH CARRIED STORY
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ALL OVER TOWN BY LUNCHTIME. AFTERNOON FARSI LANGUAGE ETTELAAT

AND MORNING FARSI, ENGLISH AND FRENCH PAPERS ALL GAVE BANNER HEADLINES TO OVERTHROW OF ZAHIR SHAH. INNER PAGES INCLUDE EXTENSIVE BACKGROUND AND BIOS OF KING AND DAUD BUT NO IRANIAN EDITORIAL COMMENT. THOUGH ALL PRESS IS CONTROLLED, PARTY NEWSPAPER IRAN NOVIN ASSUMED TO ADHERE MOST NEARLY TO STRICT GOVERNMENT LINE. I THEREFORE PROBABLY INDICATIVE OF OFFICIAL SUSPICIONS THAT IRAN NOVIN, ALONG WITH AT LEAST ONE OTHER FARSI LANGUAGE PAPER, HEADLINED FACT THAT COUP ACCOMPLISHED WITH SOVIET ARMS. TEHRAN REMAINS ABUZZ WITH RUMORS SUCH AS QTE ABDUL WALI AND TEN OTHER GENERALS EXECUTED OR LEFTIST STUDENTS PUT TO WORK DIRECTING TRAFFIC IN ABSENCE OF POLICE, ALL OF WHOM ARRESTED UNQTE.

2. PRINCIPAL CONCERN OF VARIOUS MID-LEVEL MFA OFFICIALS, INCLUDING ABBAS HEYDAYAT-VAZIRI, DIRECTOR OF FIFTH POLITICAL DIVISION (SUB-CONTINENT TURKEY AND CYPRUS), NASSER MAJD, DIRECTOR OF NINTH POLITICALDIVISION (PERSIAN GULF AND OIL) AND HORMOZ CHAMINARA, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS DIVISION, IS DEGREE OF INVOLVEMENT, IF ANY, OF USSR IN COUP. CONSESNSUS IS THAT SOVIETS, EVEN IF UNINVOLVED IN PLANNING, WERE PROBABLY AWARE OF MOVE IN ADVANCE AND WILL CERTAINLY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF RESULTS. IN THIS REGARD KNOWLEDGEABLE BBC CORRESPONDENT JOHN BIERMAN SUSPECTS THAT, GIVEN PARTICIPATION OF YOUNGER OFFICERS AND PRESUMABLY LEFTIST STUDENTS IN COUP, WHOLE AFFAIR MAY END UP FARTHER TO LEFT THAN IS IMMEDIATELY APPARENT.

2. SECONARY CONCERN OF IRANIAN OFFICIALS IS PROBABLE DELETERIOUS EFFECTS OF DAUD'S TAKEOVER ON AFGHAN-PAKISTAN RELATIONS. HEYDAYAT-VAZIRI NOTED THAT PAK AMBASSADOR SHAH NAWAZ KHAN STATED THAT DAUD'S DECISION TO SINGLE OUT PAK-AFGHAN DIFFERENCES IN HIS FIRST PUBLIC BROADCAST AS WELL AS IN MESSAGE TO ASSEMBLED AMBASSADORS AND CHARGES IN MFA CAN ONLY REOPEN OLD WOUNDS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, AND ENCOURAGE WALI KHAN IN NWFP.

3. DESPITE A NATURAL CONCERN OVER UPHEAVAL IN A NEIGHBORING COUNTRY, GOI APPEARS TO BE TAKING AFGHAN COUP IN STRIDE AND ACCORDING MFA OFFICIALS HAS ADOPTED SENSIBLE WAIT-AND-SEE POLICY BEFORE MAKING ANY DECISIONS AS TO RECOGNITION OR ATTITUDES TOWARD NEW REGIME.

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COMMENT: LIKE HIS SUBJECTS IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, HIM MUST CERTAINLY VIEW SARDAR DAUD'S COUP AS CONFIRMATION OF HIS THEORY OF SOVIET GRAND DESIGN TO ENCIRCLE IRAN. HE WILL PROBABLY ALSO VIEW DAUD'S ASSUMPTION OF POWER AS POTENTIAL THREAT TO PAKISTAN'S STABILITY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT HE WILL MENTION COUP IN HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH PRESIDENT NIXON, PERHAPS IN

ABOVE CONTEXT.
HELMS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 JUL 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973TEHRAN05036
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: TEHRAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730724/aaaaartj.tel
Line Count: 117
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 TEHRAN 4991
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 SEP 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26-Sep-2001 by martinml>; APPROVED <09-Jan-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: IRANIAN REACTION TO AFGHAN COUP
TAGS: PFOR, IR, AF
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005